

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 11, 12 and 15-17 are pending in the present application. Claims 15 and 16 have been amended. Claims 13 and 14 have been canceled.

Drawings

Applicant notes the Examiner's acceptance of the drawings as filed along with the present application on October 10, 2003.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge receipt of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on December 29, 2005, and to confirm that the documents submitted therewith have been considered and will be cited of record in the present application.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 13 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by the Kunikiyo et al. reference (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0117151).

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes the Examiner's acknowledgment that claims 1, 3, 4, 11 and 12

are allowed.

Applicant further respectfully notes the Examiner's acknowledgment that claims 15-17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In view of the acknowledgment of allowable subject matter, claims 15 and 16 have been amended to be in independent form, merely to advance prosecution of the present application. Claims 13 and 14 have been canceled. The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge that claims 15-17 are allowed.

Conclusion

As noted above, claims 15 and 16 have been amended merely to be in independent form, rather than to further distinguish over any of the relied upon prior art. This should be particularly clear in view of the acknowledgment of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the amendments to claims 15 and 16 should not be construed as narrowing scope within the meaning of *Festo*.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the corresponding rejection, and to pass the claims in the present application to issue, for at least the above reasons.

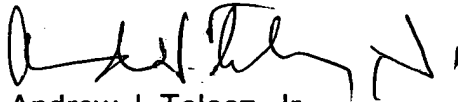
In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, please contact Andrew J. Telesz, Jr. (Reg. No. 33,581) at (571) 283-0720 in the Washington, D.C. area, to discuss these matters.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicant hereby petitions for an extension of one (1) month to February 25, 2006, for the period in which to file a response to the outstanding Office Action. The required fee of \$120.00 should be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0238.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment for any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0238.

Respectfully submitted,

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